

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1619

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 1236

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SU, US

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE PRIVATE VISIT BY PRESIDENT NIMEIRI

REF: STATE 103251

1. REFTEL MOST HELPFUL IN FILLING IN SOME OF THE BACKGROUND REGARDING NIMEIRI'S PUTATIVE JUNE US TRIP. SENIOR SUDANESE LED BY THE NOT UNDULY BASHFUL MINED KHALID, ARE OBVIOUSLY SEEKING FORCE PACE OF ANY OFFICIAL COURTESIES. RUMORS RE VISIT ARE ALREADY CIRCULATING HERE AND EMBASSY IS RECEIVING REQUESTS FROM OFFICIALS FOR SUCH INFO AS STATUS USG FOREIGN ASSISTANCE WORLD-WIDE AND AID POLICY CONSIDERATIONS RE URBAN POOR. IN ADDITION, CAS INDICATED STATE 102115, RE SPEAKER'S ABORTIVE STOPOVER, TOP GOS OFFICIALS MAY BE INORDINATELY SENSITIVE TO MANNER THEIR RECEPTION IN WASHINGTON. CAUTIONARY COMMENTS OF ACTING ASSISTANT SEC SEELYE (PAR 3 REFTEL) THUS PARTICULARLY TIMELY (IF, HOWEVER, NIMEIRI'S EFFORTS HAVE BY JUNE LIQUIDATED HOSTAGE ISSUE, I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE IN OUR INTEREST TO MAKE MORE FUSS OVER HIM THAN OTHERWISE3.

2. SHOULD BE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT KHALID AND MINSTATE DENG ARE NIMEIRI'S AGENTS BUT DO NOT NECESSARILY SPEAK FOR NIMEIRI HIMSELF. OVER THE YEARS, THE PRESIDENT HAS COWED HIS COLLEAGUES HERE THROUGH HIS WHIMSICAL EXERCISE OF ABSOLUTE POWER (E.G., KHALID'S SUMMARY REMOVAL AS FONMIN AND PUBLIC REBUKE BY NIMEIRI IN 1975). NIMEIRI'S EMISSARIES ARE THEREFORE UNDERSTANDABLY LIKELY TO BE MORE ROYALIST THAN THE KING IN TERMS OF

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INSISTING ON PROTOCOL NICETIES. BOTH FOR THIS REASON, AND TO

ASSURE THAT NIMEIRI HIMSELF FULLY UNDERSTANDS THE LEVEL OF RECEPTION THAT IS LIKELY TO PROVE FEASIBLE IN WASHINGTON, RECOMMEND I BE AUTHORIZED DISCUSS SUBJECT DIRECTLY WITH PRESIDENT HERE IN SAME TERMS AS USED BY SEELYE IN PARA 3 REFTEL. I FULLY AGREE NO VISIT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO ONE WHICH WE WOULD VIEW AS INFORMAL AND PRIVATE BUT WHICH SUDANESE MIGHT SEEK TO TRANSFORM INTO MINI-STATE VISIT. CANCELLATION SPEAKER BAKR'S BRIEF TRIP WASHINGTON INSTRUCTIVE IN THIS REGARD.

3. ACTION REQUESTED: REQUEST I BE AUTHORIZED SEE PRESIDENT NIMEIRI TO MAKE CLEAR TO HIM: (A) THAT SECRETARY WILL TAKE INITIATIVE WITH RESPECT PRESIDENT FORD'S RECEIVING HIM BUT THAT OUTCOME UNLIKELY BE KNOWN FOR SEVERAL WEEKS AT LEAST; AND (B) THAT NIMEIRI'S RECEPTION IN WASHINGTON, WHILE IT WILL BE CORDIAL, COULD NOT INCLUDE SAME PROTOCOL TOUCHES OR OFFICIAL RECEPTION AT AIRPORT AS IF HE WERE ON OFFICIAL VISIT. I WOULD STRESS THAT USG WOULD BE VERY HAPPY SEE HIM WHILE HE IS IN US BUT THAT WE WISH THERE TO BE NO MISUNDERSTANDING IN HIS MIND REGARDING SPECIAL RECEPTION AND OTHER COURTESIES WHICH CAN BE EXPECTED, HAVING REGARD FOR CHARACTER HIS TRIP, PREOCCUPATION TOP LEVEL OFFICIALS WITH CAMPAIGN AND HEAVY PRESSURE OTHER BUSINESS. BREWER

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